

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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R 032345 Z MAY 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: EAGR, EMIN, PFOR, TH

SUBJ: STOCKPILE DISPOSALS

REF: STATE 71878

1. RTG EMBASSY ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COUNSELOR WIBUL  
MAY 3 HANDED OVER O PL MATIC OTE TO EB OFFICER CONCERNING  
STOCKPILE DISPOSALS. TEXT, OMITTING SALUTATION AND  
COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE, FOLLOWS:

"1. THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND VIEWS THE PROPOSED  
DISPOSAL OF SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES OF TIN WITH SERIOUS  
CONCERN, AND EXPRESSES STRONG OPPOSITION TO SUCH RELEASES  
WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY CAUSE DEPRESSION OF THE PRICE OF  
TIN AND DETERIORATION OF THE THAI ECONOMY. IN FACT,  
THE PROPOSED PROGRAM OF DISPOSAL OF TIN IS BOUND TO  
PRODUCE DISRUPTION OF WORLD TIN MARKET AND ADVERSE IMPACT  
ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH HIGH DEGREE OF DEPENDENCE  
ON REVENUE FROM TIN EXPORTS.

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"2. IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH SALES MUST BE MADE BY THE  
UNITED STATES, THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND FORMALLY  
REQUESTS THE UNITED STATES AUTHORITIES CONCERNED NOT TO  
RELEASE THE STOCKPILE WHEN STRAITS TIN PRICE DROPS BELOW

LOWER SECTOR OF MALAYSIAN DOLLARS 633 PER PICUL. THIS REQUEST IS DESIGNED TO REDUCE TO THE MINIMUM THE

DISRUPTIVE EFFECTS OF SUCH SALES ON THE THAI ECONOMY.

3. THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND IS OF THE VIEW THAT CLOSE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BE CONTINUED CITY, LONG KHANH PROVINCE, DESTROYING APPROXIMATELY 70 PERCENT OF THE BRIDGE. LIGHT ABF WERE REPORTED IN TAY NINH AND HAU NGHIA PROVINCES RESULTING IN ONE FRIENDLY WOUNDED.

2. HIGH- LEVEL REGION V ICCS CANDEL SOURCES TELL US THAT THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION TO THE AN LOC SUB- REGIONAL TEAM DOES NOT WANT TO PULL OUT, BUT HAS BEEN ORDERED BY SAIGON TO DO SO. IF THE INDONESIANS PULL OUT, THE HUNGARIANS AND THE POLES WILL GO WITH THEM; THUS THE CANADIANS ARE HOPING THAT THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION IN SAIGON WILL RECONSIDER. ( COMMENT: IF THE EMBASSY PLANS TO TRY TO INFLUENCE THE INDONESIANS, ONE GOOD ARGUMENT TO USE IS THE FACT THAT IN CEASE- FIRE REGION V, THE ONLY PLACE WHERE THE PRESENCE OF AN ICCS TEAM HAS HAD AN IMPACT ON THE FIGHTING IS AN LOC, WHICH HAD BEEN SHELLED DAILY UNTIL THE SUB- REGIONAL TEAM ARRIVED ON APRIL 5. FROM APRIL 7 ON, AN LOC HAS NOT BEEN SHELLED. END COMMENT.)

3. THE EXCHANGE OF CIVILIANS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 2 AT LOC NINH ( BINH LONG PROVINCE) AND THIEN NGON ( TAY NINH PROVINCE) WAS CANCELLED BECAUSE THE PRG WOULD NOT GIVE THE ICCS A WRITTEN GUARANTEE OF SAFETY. 400 CIVILIANS WERE TO HAVE BEEN RELEASED AT LOC NINH BY THE RVN, AND THE PRG WERE TO HAVE RELEASED 28 CIVILIANS AT THIEN NGON. THE NEXT ATTEMPT AT EXCHANGE DEPENDS ON DECISIONS IN SAIGON.

4. IN SPITE OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN UNCHANGING SITUATION, RVN OFFICIALS IN HAU NGHIA ARE CONCERNED THAT COMMUNIST MOVEMENT ON THE WEST BANK OF THE VAM CO DONG IS INCREASING. THEY REPORT THAT SINCE 19 APRIL, TWO BATTALIONS OF THE 271 NVA REGIMENT ENTERED SOUTHWESTERN DUC HUE FROM CAMBODIA AND ARE REMAINING IN POSITION. OTHER COMMUNIST FORCES HAVE MOVED EAST- SOUTH- EAST TOWARD GIA DINH AND LONG AN WITH THE POSSIBLE INTENTION OF REINFORCING THE GIA DINH F40 SAPPER BATTALION. IN AN AREA SOUTHWEST OF HIEP HOA VILLAGE, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE CONSTRUCTED 60 HOUSES, AND HAU NGHIA PROVINCE CHIEF HAU WANTS III CORPS HELP IN DESTROYING THEM AND DISRUPTING TWO BATTALIONS OF THE 271 ST REPORTEDLY IN WESTERN DUC HUE. TWICE- WEEKLY COMMUNIST CONVOYS HAVE, ACCORDING TO RVN OFFICIALS, BEEN SIGHTED MOVING ON THE CAMBODIAN SIDE OF THE HAU NGHIA BORDER, AND IT IS REPORTED THAT AMMUNITION IS BEING CACHED ALONG THE BORDER.

5. AREAS EAST OF THE VAM CO DONG WHICH BEFORE THE CEASE- FIRE WERE  
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CONTESTED DURING THE DAYTIME ( INCLUDING NORTHERN TRANG BANGZCQJ NORTHERN TRUNG LAP VILLAGE, AND PARTS OF AN NINH VILLAGE) ARE STILL

CONTESTED. FRIENDLY FORCES CAN, AS BEFORE, CONDUCT OPERATIONS INTO ANY OF THESE AREAS, BUT AS SOON AS THEY LEAVE, COMMUNIST FORCES CAN MOVE ABOUT WITH RELATIVE FREEDOM. NIGHTTIME SECURITY OUTSIDE OF THE LARGER TOWNS OF HAU NGHIA REMAINS FAIR TO POOR.

6. ALTHOUGH LOCAL VC FORCES HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN AUGMENTED RECENTLY BY 60 HAU NGHIA YOUTHS, THERE IS STILL A LACK OF VCI OR GUERRILLAS TO LEAD NVA FORCES INTO THE PROVINCE AND HELP SECURE SUPPLIES. FIGHTS CONTINUE OCCASIONALLY BETWEEN VC AND NVA FORCES. NVA SOLDIERS WITH THE 271 ST REGIMENT REPORTEDLY KILLED TWO GUERRILLAS IN DUC HUE ON FEBRUARY 26 AND ONE GUERRILLA ON MARCH 29. THE DEATH IN THSLATTER CASE WAS REPORTEDLY DUE TO A DISAGREEMENT  
VER WHO - THE NVA OR THE VC - SHOULD MOVE OUT FIRST  
TO ATTACK AN RVN POSITION.

7. ALTHOUGH THE BASIC SITUATION IN EASTERN HAU NGHIA HAS CHANGED LITTLE, RVN SOURCES REPORT WHAT THEY CONSIDER " NEW" DEVELOPMENTS IN WESTERN BINH DUONG - THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE QUYET THANG BATTALION IN THE HO BO WOODS, INCREASED SHADOW SUPPLY FROM TRUNG LAP' S XOM MOI HAMLET AND TRANG BANG CITY, INCREASED NIGHTLY COMMUNIST TRAFFIC UP AND DOWN ROUTE 15, AND THE APPEARANCE OF A NEW SAPPER BATTALION, THE F30, AND A NEW LOCAL FORCE COMPANY , THE C27. A GENUINE NEW PROBLEM WHICH HAS ARISEN SINCE THE CEASE- FIRE IS LACK OF AMMUNITION. A SOLDIER IN BAO TRAI REPORTED THAT HE AND HIS FRIENDS ARE SHORT OF M-16, M-60, AND M-79 AMMUNITION. THE COMMANDER OF THE 25 TH ARVN DIVISION STATES THAT WHEREAS A GIVEN POSITION MIGHT FIRE 50 TO 100 ROUNDS BEFORE THE CEASE- FIRE, IT NOW CAN FIRE ONLY THREE ROUNDS.

8. RVN OFFICIALS ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA. BRIGADIER GENERAL TU THINKS THAT IF PHNOM PENH FALLS TO THE COMMUNISTS

" THE PARIS AGREEMTN IS FINISHED." ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANY MILITARY MOVEMENTS OR PREPARATIONS WHICH WOULD LEAD US TO BELIEVE THE ARVN IS PREPARING AN ASSAULT FROM HAU NGHIA INTO CAMBODIA, HAU NGHIA PROVINCE CHIEF LTC HAU REPORTEDLY HAS THE 83 RD RANGERS OPERATING IN CAMBODIA.

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OM RVN MILITARY OFFICERS THINK FIGHTING WILL CON XNUE IN HAU NGHIA, BUT THEY HAVE DIFFERING OPINIONS ON WHEN THE NEXT MAJOR NVA OFFENSIVE WILL COME. ONE THEORY IS THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL TRY TO CUT NATIONAL ROUTE 1 JUST NORTH AND JUST SOUTH OF TRANG BANG DISTRICT TOWN IN ORDER TO ISOLATE TAY NINH AND ESTABLISH A PRG CAPITAL THERE, IN PHUOC LONG, OR BINH LONG. OTHERS BELIEVE IT UNLIKELY THAT HAU NGHIA IS A TARGET FOR MAJOR MILITARY ACTIVITY EXCEPT TO CUT NATIONAL ROUTE 1 AT TRANG BANG IF SOME LIMITED OFFENSIVE IS MOUNTED BY THE ENEMY IN TAY NINH. ANOTHER THEORY IS THAT NATIONAL ROUTE 1 WILL BE CUT AFTER THE COMMUNISTS ATTACK

OR SEIZE THE BAND OF INSECURE VILLAGES IN THE MIDDLE OF HAU NGHIA -  
AN TINH, THAI MY, PHUOC HIEP, AND TRUNG LAP. THIS BAND OF VILLAGES  
HAS BEEN UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE 101 ST NVA REGIMENT TO THE NORTHEAST  
AND THE 271 ST NVA REGIMENT TO THE WEST SINCE JANUARY.  
WALKINSHAW UNQUOTE  
BUNKER

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